

CHAPTER 6

BICYCLE PROGRAMS

OVERVIEW

Cambridge promotes and encourages bicycling through a variety of programs in addition to establishing a supportive physical environment. These include:

- + offering extensive educational opportunities, both in schools and in the broader community;
- + providing materials and resources to community members;
- + establishing zoning requirements to ensure that new development is bicycle-friendly;
- + the adoption of a Parking and Transportation Demand Management program to help reduce the use of single-occupancy vehicles; and
- + providing support to community partners and organizations.

Since the publication of the 2015 Bicycle Plan, the City's bicycle programs have expanded and diversified, enhancing outreach and working to create more equitable access in urban cycling. Cambridge's programming is designed to support and empower the community by providing information, materials, technical and other resources as needed, with a special focus on underrepresented demographics and people new to urban cycling.

In order to ensure all Cambridge residents have access to the resources and information they need to participate in bicycling and make effective use of sustainable transportation, Cambridge offers free classes and resources such as maps, guides, online tips, public transportation schedules, helmets, bicycle lights, and translated materials.

The City works collaboratively with the community to consider the full scope of planning, engineering, education, and outreach around transportation. Some of the standing entities are described below, and much of the work routinely involves interagency

efforts and collaboration in the form of coordinating committees. Residents, advocacy and community organizations, businesses, and institutions are all important partners in advancing our common vision of a sustainable, livable city.



"There's nothing like starting off the day with a brisk bike ride! ... I also appreciate moments when pop up bike events happen... It's so much greater when we advocate for safer biking together! I look forward to even more bicycle volume and appreciate advocacy for Cambridge kids (my middle schooler included) to get outside and learn to ride. Recently he surprised me when borrowing a friend's bike, that he did learn in gym class! I know there's more work to be done there but it was a nice thing to see for a kid who needs to get out more. During the shut-in times, although I'm not commuting, getting out on the bike always cheers me up and is probably the only exercise I get. Very important health topic!"

—Heather Gockel, Cambridgeport

COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS

EDUCATION

Cambridge's goal is to enable people to make safe, effective, and sustainable transportation choices. Education is an important part of this, and the City's educational programming covers practical issues like how to be safe around vehicles and pedestrians, bicycle maintenance, rules of the road, urban cycling techniques, and tips for cycling in the winter or carrying items like groceries. It also addresses big-picture topics, including how transportation is connected to issues like energy use, climate change, personal and public health, and the livability of a community.

The City creates and widely distributes a variety of bicycle outreach and educational materials, hosts free bike workshops and skill-building sessions for the public and City employees, and provides support for local organization and private entities engaged in outreach and education.

FOR PEOPLE WHO DRIVE

Effective driver education is critical to the safety of people on bikes and most driver education programs in the United States are inadequate at teaching people how to operate motor vehicles safely around people walking or bicycling. This is a problem nationwide and it is difficult for any single municipality to make significant inroads, as driver education falls under state jurisdiction. Enhanced motorist education that teaches how to look for and interact with people bicycling should be part of the driver education curriculum.¹ To help address this and improve safety for all modes, Cambridge makes efforts to engage with and include drivers in its outreach and education around transportation (see materials and information discussed below). Additionally, the City works with statewide advocacy groups to encourage changes to driver education

curriculum, in addition to creating substantive training programs, like those listed below.

People driving personal vehicles are not the only drivers on streets in Cambridge. The MBTA serves as a critical piece of our public transportation infrastructure, and the City works with the agency to regularly update training protocols for operators, ensure that bus-bike interactions are as safe as possible, and advocate for policy and systems changes as needed. In 2020, the City, in collaboration with the Livable Streets Alliance, MassBike, The Loop Lab, and the MBTA, created a new training series for MBTA bus operators, including 11 video modules outlining proper bus operator behaviors around people biking, focusing on turns, speed, communication, and empathy. In addition to this video series, the training curriculum was also updated to incorporate more bike-bus scenarios.



There are also many commercial vehicles operating on the streets of Cambridge. Cambridge has reached out to companies and organizations operating ride hail and rideshare vehicles to share educational materials and discuss ways of promoting safe driving. The City has also hosted various educational and marketing campaigns to highlight the particular role that drivers have for ensuring safety for everyone; this includes maintaining safe vehicle speeds, watching for people bicycling before opening a car door, and looking for people walking or bicycling before making a turn (the photo on page 8 shows an example from the public safety posters installed at Bluebikes stations).

FOR PEOPLE WHO BIKE

When people bicycle, they need to know traffic laws and benefit from gaining experience navigating the urban environment. The City creates outreach and educational materials geared towards bicycling, hosts free workshops and skill-building sessions for the public and City employees, and provides support for private entities engaged in outreach. Also addressed are important tips on how to travel safely around motor vehicles and how to be mindful and careful around people walking. In addition to programming for adults, the City manages a robust Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program, educating second- and sixth-grade students on walking and cycling safety, and engaging high school students in hands-on skills-building classes. See below for more information on the SRTS Program.



Various events and classes, such as bicycle maintenance clinics, are offered for a people with a wide range of backgrounds and experiences.

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND FUNCTIONAL GIVEAWAYS

Cambridge creates and provides resources to support people in making safe and sustainable transportation choices. These materials are distributed at community events, available to the public in City buildings, and sold at cost to institutions and organizations in the private sector.

GETTING AROUND CAMBRIDGE MAPS

This free map serves as the City's primary educational piece for people who bike, walk, use transit or drive in Cambridge. It includes practical information for traveling in the city by all modes and information is presented in a visually engaging manner.

GETTING AROUND CAMBRIDGE STREET CODE

The Street Code was created to demystify getting around Cambridge and is made up of five main sections:

1. Rules of the Road
2. Reduce Risk: Be Alert
3. Reduce Risk: Be Predictable
4. Responsibility
5. Respect Others.

In 2019, the Street Code was translated into Bangla, Amharic, Spanish, French, and Portuguese, in addition to English.

GETTING AROUND CAMBRIDGE MAGAZINE

The Getting Around Cambridge Magazine is an annual publication; previously it was mailed to 50,000 households in Cambridge, but moved online in 2020 because of COVID-19 restrictions. It is a creative way to update residents about new programs, street projects, educational opportunities, and resources related to getting around our community. Guest writers have included students of the Cambridge Public Schools, the Pedestrian, Transit, and Bicycle Committees, and various City departments, including the Council on Aging, Department of Human Service Programs, DPW, Transportation, Public Health, and Cambridge Committee for Persons with Disabilities.

BICYCLING IN CAMBRIDGE



**GettingAround
Cambridge**

FAST. FLEXIBLE. FUN.

Examples of educational materials available at www.cambridgema.gov/bike

DOORS ARE DANGEROUS

Vehicle doors pose a very serious threat to people biking. Look before opening a car door — it could save someone's life.

People driving or riding in cars, trucks, taxis, or any other motor vehicle with a door:

- 1 Check your rear-view mirror.
- 2 Check your side-view mirror.
- 3 Open the door with your far hand. The "Dutch Reach" forces your body to turn, making it a habit to look for bicyclists.

People biking should ride outside of the "door zone"

People biking should ride at least 3 feet from parked cars to avoid doors, on streets with and without bike lanes.

City of Cambridge
Massachusetts
www.cambridgema.gov/visionzero

The Cambridge Street Code includes visuals that demonstrate how to safely use the various kinds of infrastructure found on streets in Cambridge.

GETTING AROUND CAMBRIDGE

COMMUTING FOR HEALTH

BUS PRIORITY

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

2018

GIVEAWAYS

Cambridge's approach is to make its free promotional materials, distributed at community events, functional and educational. These giveaways include bicycle lights, reflective leg bands, bells, tire patch kits, activity books, and reflective vests. People who attend bicycle workshops are eligible for one free helmet each year.



Giveaways like lights and reflective bands are useful for people biking.

RESIDENT PARKING PERMITS

Tips about safe travel, Vision Zero, and related information are often included in the annual residential permit parking packet sent out by the Traffic, Parking & Transportation Department.

"WATCH FOR BIKES" DECALS

Cambridge provides small mirror and window decals with the saying "Watch for Bikes" that are intended to be placed in vehicles where they will be seen by people exiting the vehicle including mirrors and windows. These are distributed at community events and with City informational materials, and are installed on the passenger windows of taxi cabs in Cambridge. Installation on cabs has become institutionalized and is part of the biannual inspection undertaken by the Cambridge License Commission. Zipcar has installed these decals in their cars, and Uber has distributed them to local drivers. Brochures with this important message have been included in citywide mailings and in the Traffic, Parking & Transportation brochure that is given to everyone receiving a parking sticker or visitor permit.



Watch for Bikes stickers.

COMMUNICATIONS

MEDIA OUTLETS

Outreach through local and regional media outlets provides the opportunity to publicize information and promote bicycling to a wider audience.

VIDEOS

Videos are useful for visual instruction and information and can often be more engaging than written information. The Cambridge Police Department has used video for traffic safety education, emphasizing bike safety. The Food and Fitness Policy Council created a short video with Cambridge Community Television on active transportation as a good source of physical activity in Cambridge, which can be found at <http://www.cctvcambridge.org/healthheroes>.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, a pivot was made to virtual (online) educational workshops, which provided the opportunity to record the workshops and post them online. Examples include videos from the Healthy Aging and Cycling series, the Urban Cycling Basics workshop, the ABCs of Bike Maintenance series, and the Safe Routes to School curriculum. Additionally, video clips demonstrating how to use the Bluebikes system are posted.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE PRESENCE

The City has a [webpage](http://www.cambridgema.gov/bike) dedicated to bike resources, [cambridgema.gov/bike](http://www.cambridgema.gov/bike), which is regularly updated with materials and information about projects, programs, workshops and rides, bike-related data, and more. The City also regularly distributes an active transportation e-newsletter, where subscribers can get updates about meetings, events, and announcements related to biking and walking. These updates are also posted frequently on the City's social media accounts.

Healthy Aging and Bicycling in Cambridge Virtual Series

Do you **enjoy cycling** and are looking for ways to be active while respecting social distancing?

Do you want to **try bicycling again**, but are feeling rusty?

Are you interested in learning about cycling considerations for older adults **from the comfort of your home**?

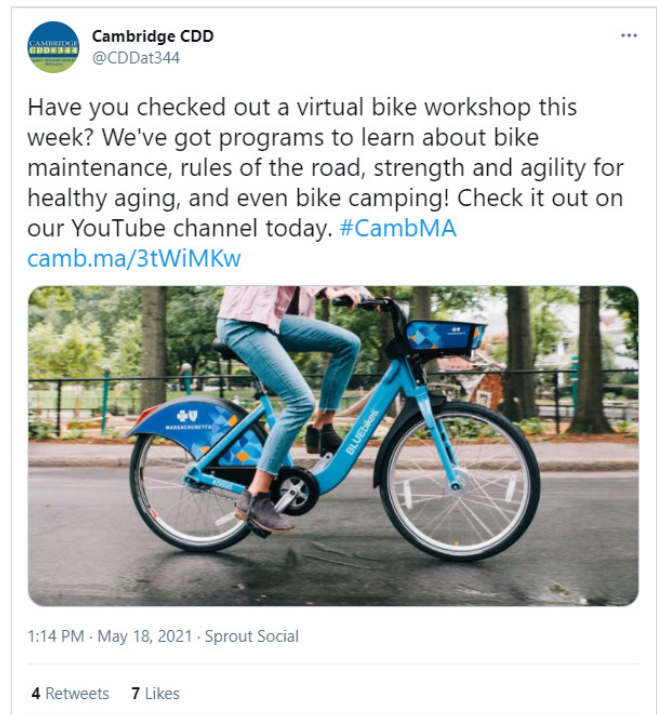
Cambridge's Community Development Department, in partnership with the Council on Aging, is launching a **Healthy Aging and Bicycling in Cambridge program** this October. Five 1-hour workshops followed by a 15-minute question and answer session will be held virtually over Zoom. Participants and instructors will be able to see and engage with each other. For more information, visit cambridgema.gov/bikeworkshops.

Classes on Tuesdays (Oct. 13, 20, 27 and Nov. 3, 10) from 9:30 AM to 10:45 AM

[Click Here to Register](#)
or call the Cambridge Council on Aging at 617-349-6220

Class	Date	Time
Cycling Basics for Older Adults	October 13	9:30am - 10:45am
Getting Back on the Bike	October 20	9:30am - 10:45am
Urban Cycling Basics	October 27	9:30am - 10:45am
Design for All Ages: Bike Lanes in Cambridge	November 3	9:30am - 10:45am
Adaptive Cycling	November 10	9:30am - 10:45am

Digital announcement for virtual workshops held during the COVID-19 pandemic.



The Community Development Department uses social media as one way to communicate events and public service announcements.

BLUEBIKES PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

The map panels of the Bluebikes Bike Share stations provide space on one side for Public Service Announcements (PSAs), and the City has used this opportunity to promote Bluebikes, sustainable transportation, energy efficiency, local business promotion, speed limit changes, messages about sharing the roads respectfully, youth-designed projects of the EF Global Challenge, public health communications around COVID-19, and more.



PSA's at Bluebikes stations are one way to get important public messages out.

REAL-TIME TRANSIT DISPLAYS

Located at 11 municipal buildings and in bus stops around Cambridge, these real-time transit displays show when the next bus and train arrives. They also display the location of nearby Bluebikes stations and the availability of bikes and docks at each.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Community events are excellent outreach and engagement opportunities, drawing people with a diversity of experience and interest in biking. At these events, City staff and volunteers engage with the public informally, often through tabling, to distribute materials and information, ask for feedback on projects, give away freebies like bike lights and bells, and play educational games. At citywide events such as Fresh Pond Day and Cambridge Fixit Clinics, Cambridge provides free bicycle check-ups and repair instruction to help keep people riding.

The City's Community Development Department also hosts a crew of high school interns through the summer to assist with dozens of outreach events. College-aged interns (with the assistance of a few high school representatives) create the outreach calendar based on where they believe young people will most often be throughout the summer months to increase engagement with that age group. A year-round high school intern provides feedback on outreach efforts and helps develop effective methods for reaching high school-aged residents.



Danehy Park Family Day, Summer 2019.

PARK(ING) DAY

The City hosts an entire day devoted to engaging the community in transforming parking spaces into something else for the day. The goal of this international event is to allow the community to realize just how much space a parking spot takes up, and to explore other possible uses of that precious real estate. Several bicycle-related spots have been hosted in the past, including bicycle tune-ups, pop-up bike lanes, and bicycle parking.

CAMBRIDGE GROUP RIDES

Cambridge encourages people from all backgrounds to participate in City-sponsored group rides. Designed to be fun and engaging, group rides foster community and serve as an opportunity for people seeking to gain more experience bicycling in an urban environment. City staff support the Cambridge Bicycle Committee in organizing themed group rides each May for National Bike Month, the annual Bowtie Ride, and specialized rides such as the kids' Halloween Bike Ride or winter rides. The City also hosts various group rides for young people, including the annual Youth Rock 'N Ride, which promotes the Bluebikes Youth Discount program offered to Cambridge high school students ages 16+. We also co-sponsor and assist with many community-led rides throughout the year.



Bow Tie Ride, September 2015



"I had an incredible experience going on the 'Cycle to the Source' bike ride with the Cambridge Water Department. City employees were friendly and informative. We learned a lot, and got to bike right across the top of the earthen dam to see the gatehouse at Stony Brook Reservoir!"

—David Lawrence, West Cambridge

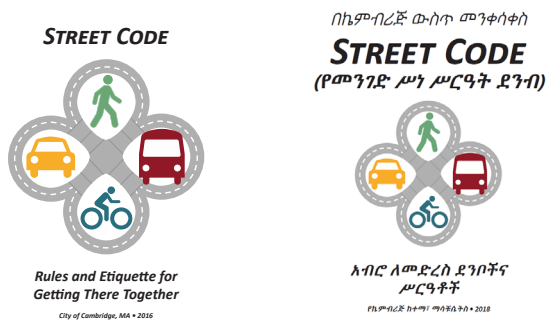
BICYCLE WORKSHOPS

The City offers bicycle education workshops throughout the year, free to those who work or live in Cambridge. Cambridge engages hundreds of residents in these classes, covering topics such as bicycle maintenance, winter bicycle commuting, "urban cycling basics," "women-powered cycling," and on-bike refresher training. In FY21 (July 2020-June 2021), approximately 530 people participated in classes. In addition to supporting the general cycling community, these classes are particularly important in addressing identified barriers to cycling and continually evolve to best promote equity and accessibility. Cambridge collaborates with [MassBike](#) (Massachusetts Bicycle Coalition) and local organizations to create new materials, updated curricula, new workshops, and instructor professional development, such as the cultural competency and English Language Learning training. Cambridge also leads customized trainings for various City-affiliated departments and programs, including the Cambridge Community Learning Center and Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program counselors.

BROADENING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Cambridge has conducted significant bicycle and public health related outreach to traditionally underrepresented populations, i.e., groups who are not seen in the bicycling community at levels equal to their presence in the broader community. This includes some racial and ethnic groups, as well as women, older individuals, and some immigrant communities. Among the actions taken is the translation of resources into multiple languages (Amharic, Bengali, French, Spanish, English).

Cambridge is continually building out new programs to promote equity and meet the needs of Cambridge residents for a range of abilities and identities.



THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TEAM (CET) ²

Working through this team, City staff focused on determining what the barriers are to bicycling for underrepresented groups. After hosting a series of focus groups, specific issues were identified, leading to actions including training bicycle class instructors in cultural competency, hosting bicycle education workshops for immigrants, and creating a PSA campaign designed to invite all members of the Cambridge community to bicycle.

ENCOURAGING WOMEN TO BIKE

While women have been represented in the Cambridge bicycling community at higher levels than average in the US, the percentage is still significantly less than representative. In order to

support the needs of women who would like to bicycle, the City has put on “women-powered” cycling workshops and promotes women cycling through other venues. Bluebikes promotes an annual Women’s Month in October and the Bicycle Committee created a celebratory ride for the 19th Amendment 100-year anniversary.

THE MEN’S HEALTH LEAGUE (MHL)

MHL is an initiative of the Cambridge Public Health Department that addresses the prevention of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes, especially in men of color. MHL runs several events, including a series of outdoor bike rides for this group through its Fit for Life and Fitness Brothers programs, which have the aim of increasing physical activity, supporting healthy eating habits, and educating men about important topics related to their health.



“For people who have one or more jobs and have kids it’s best to have an activity that is part of their daily routine.”

—Arif Hussain, Fit for Life program mentee turned mentor.



“Dads and Kids” Bike Ride, organized by Cambridge Dads (a program of the Cambridge Public Health Dept. and Dept. of Human Services) and the Men’s Health League (Public Health).

HEALTHY AGING

The Healthy Aging and Cycling Program launched in 2015. As part of the original initiative, the City engaged with over 250 people over age 50 to talk about barriers to bicycling in our community.³ The outreach included focus groups and “street team” tabling all over the city. It also included a series of bicycle education workshops, with free bicycle tune-ups. Ideas articulated through these conversations mirror those that were captured through the public process of the 2015 Bicycle Network Plan.

In 2021, a new program was launched to further promote accessible and sustainable mobility. The new Healthy Aging program was designed to address barriers to cycling for older adults identified in a 2020 program interest survey answered by more than 50 older adults in Cambridge. The three primary barriers identified include: fear of motor vehicle traffic, concerns about physical ability to ride a bicycle, and not owning a bicycle. This program addresses these barriers through a progressive 3-unit program including: spin and strengthening classes, a refresher on the rules and safety aspects of biking in an urban environment, and training on renting bike share bicycles for individuals who do not own a bike. The City continues to seek innovative ways to support and engage older adults around bicycling in Cambridge.

TEAM CDD


The Community Development Department in collaboration with the Cambridge Police Department created a new Earn-A-Bike program working with Cambridge High School students. As part of the program, students complete a mechanics training program and then work under the supervision of an experienced mechanic to refurbish and repair bicycles that have been discarded or donated to the program. In the future, we would like to grow this program, working with local tenant councils and organizations to identify Cambridge youth in need of bicycles and matching them with repaired bicycles. Before receiving bicycles, helmets, and lights, each cohort will participate in a mandatory course on bicycle safety and urban cycling basics.



Students learning to maintain and repair bikes.

ADAPTIVE BICYCLING SUPPORT PROGRAMS

In the future, Cambridge would like to explore programming and formats specifically tailored to adaptive bicycling. In 2020, in order to assess program needs, Cambridge surveyed people about the barriers to biking for people with disabilities and/or limitations inhibiting them from cycling; 93% of respondents communicated interest in trying adaptive bicycles if made available.



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Examples of educational materials available at www.cambridgema.gov/bike

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN IN CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

As noted in Chapter 1, the Cambridge School Wellness Policy supports and promotes active transportation for the health and well-being of its students and staff

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

In spring 2015, Cambridge launched a formal Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program to support and encourage safe walking and biking to school.

As a first step, parents were surveyed to learn more about students' travel patterns and identify barriers to walking and biking to school. Two schools, Vassal Lane Upper School and Tobin Montessori School, began piloting outreach programs, including

twice-a-year walk/bike to school day celebrations, frequent walker/biker punch cards to earn raffle prizes, and in-school pedestrian and bicycle training.

As of 2017, SRTS program had expanded to all Cambridge elementary and upper schools, where all second- and sixth-grade students complete trainings in pedestrian and cycling safety. SRTS staff also engage with high school students at CRLS (Cambridge Rindge and Latin, the only public high school in Cambridge), including offering bicycle skill-learning opportunities and helping age-eligible students to access Bluebikes. In addition, there are school district-wide events to promote Safe Routes to School, including Massachusetts Walk and Bike to School Day and a number of kid-focused activities at Fresh Pond Day such as a bike rodeos, bicycle decorating, a kid's bike parade, and bike tune ups.

For more information, visit the City's [Safe Routes to School webpage](#).



SECOND GRADE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SAFETY

The SRTS program oversees a four-lesson Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Unit for all second-grade students. The pedestrian lessons teach the importance of safe walking behaviors and the basic elements of pedestrian infrastructure. The bicycle safety lesson includes how to correctly fit a helmet, rules of the road, and basic bicycle maintenance. In 2020, a series of education videos were developed to serve as a resource for teachers and parents/ caregivers, so the training could still be held during times when students were not physically in school.



On-bike training class.

"The time I went SUPER fast down a huge hill! Let me tell you, it was kind of hard getting up to the top, but when you go down, you feel like you are flying! I remember when I went down a hill for the first time, it was one of the coolest feelings I have ever had! I like when you feel the wind blowing on your face. I LOVE biking!"

—6th grade Bike Joys

SIXTH GRADE ON-BICYCLE TRAINING

SRTS on-bike training is given to all sixth-grade students. While many young people initially learn how to ride a bicycle in parks and on sidewalks, this program is designed to help students transition to bicycling on roads, to enable them to bicycle in their neighborhoods, or while traveling to school, a park, or library. In order to navigate streets safely, students learn about effective riding techniques, rules of the road, riding on roads with or without bike lanes, avoiding being “doored,” intersection strategy, balancing at low speeds, dealing with potholes and other roadway obstructions, and basic bicycle repair and maintenance. Students utilize a city-owned bike fleet of child specific bicycles for off-road drills and an on-road group bike ride that visits local bicycle infrastructure and allows students to practice the skills they learned with the additional supervision of Cambridge Police Officers.



Students taking part in an on-bike class.

BIKE WEEK CONTEST

In 2020, due to restrictions around in-person trainings, Cambridge moved its sixth grade SRTS program online and created a series of short videos covering the curriculum. To give students an incentive to take part in the training virtually, Cambridge created a Bike Week contest: students who watched all the videos and completed corresponding assignments over the week would be entered into a drawing for a new bicycle. In total, 10 Cambridge students were awarded bicycles in the Bike Week contests.

BICYCLE RODEOS

Cambridge routinely organizes skills and informational clinics for youth as a fun and engaging way to introduce concepts around bicycle safety while providing the opportunity to practice skills necessary to become better and safer while biking. These bicycle rodeos cover helmet fit, bicycle handling, basic maintenance, and usually include an obstacle course designed to mimic the urban cycling streetscape.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the City's after-school recreation program offered socially and physically distant bicycle rodeos during the 2020-2021 school year. Students in grades JK-8 participated in condensed versions of the usual in-school SRTS program, learning bicycle helmet fit, ABC bicycle safety checks, hand signaling, and basic bicycle handling skills, with an obstacle course and short rides on off-street bicycle facilities to practice.



Participants at a Bike Rodeo.

Bicycle Rodeos

COMING TO SPRING IN THE SUN

**Tuesdays, Wednesdays, & Thursdays
in May and June**

Where: Hoyt Field basketball courts, 1 Montague St

When: Wednesdays 2:30PM to 6PM May 5 - June 17, 2021

Who: Any students grades JK-8 participating in the Department of Human Service Program's (free) After-School Recreation Program



A bicycle rodeo is a fun clinic to practice riding skills, try your hand at maintenance, and learn about safety!

Bring your own bicycle or use one of our fleet bicycles (will fit students grades 4 to 8). Students in grades JK to 3 are welcome to participate on their own bicycles. **Helmets will be required in order to participate** (City of Cambridge will have a limited number of helmets to give out for keeping).

Participants, instructors, and caregivers will be required to follow physical and social distancing measures.



"I believe in public education. I invest a lot of my time and effort in the public schools of Cambridge, and respect anyone else with a good heart who invests in the betterment of their community, specifically Cambridge. To be involved in collaborative efforts with the Cambridge Community Development Department in organizing a Bike Week program to educate and ultimately give away free bicycles to the youth of Cambridge was inspiring. It made me realize that what we do directly affects people in a positive way; supporting healthy habits, education for healthy living, and a healthy respect among our community."

—Timothy Gill, Physical Education Teacher, Tobin Montessori School

LOCAL STREET AUDITS FOR STUDENTS

In 2019, students from Qualls, an after-school program geared for boys of color at Fletcher Maynard Academy (a K-5 school in Cambridge), performed a “street audit,” in the Port neighborhood. A street audit is an in-person exploration of an area to assess the condition of the public street environment—including sidewalks, intersections and bicycle parking infrastructure—and then make suggestions for improvement. During this audit, the twenty-four third-, fourth- and fifth-graders specifically identified concerns about the lack of covered and secure bicycle parking, both at their residences and near the schools, and the impact of snow in blocking bike racks and bike lanes.



Students in the Qualls Program



Shawn Miles with Fletcher Maynard Academy students



The Annual Rock 'N Ride event for high school

HIGH SCHOOL

The City hosts a number of events catering specifically to high school students. Rock 'N Ride is an annual celebration of spring and bicycling and is an outreach event introducing high school students to the Bluebikes bikeshare system. The festival involves lawn games, music from local youth bands, snacks from local vendors, giveaways, Bluebikes one-on-one intro sessions, as well as a group ride on Bluebikes around Cambridge.

Cambridge high school youth ages 16-19 are also eligible for very low-cost Bluebikes memberships (\$25/year for unlimited rides), sponsored by the City.

MSYEP MINI WORKSHOPS

Each year Cambridge hosts mini-workshops for Cambridge high school students during lunch and during the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program (MSYEP), where students are introduced to bicycle safety checks and maintenance, rules of the road, route planning, and proper bicycle locking technique. While many of the students may already have previously learned this material, mini workshops are excellent opportunities to reinforce information.

ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND INTERDEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION

CAMBRIDGE BICYCLE COMMITTEE

In 1991, the Cambridge Bicycle Committee was officially created as a permanent advisory committee appointed by the City Manager. It comprises people who live or work in Cambridge, representatives from Harvard and MIT, and staff from related departments: Community Development (CDD), Traffic, Parking, and Transportation (TP&T), Public Works (DPW), Public Health (DPH), and Police (CPD).

The purpose of the Committee is to work to improve conditions for bicycling in Cambridge, to promote bicycling as transportation for all members of the community, and to improve safety for people biking. The Committee reviews projects, provides advice and assistance to City departments, and advocates for improvements. Committee members also undertake projects on their own or in conjunction with City staff.

The Committee organizes free community rides throughout the year. There are traditionally rides in May held as part of Bike Week/Bike Month celebrations, which have themes that highlight and celebrate the riches of Cambridge. These have included overview of public art, history tours, famous people, architecture, and more. Police Department staff accompany the rides, which are specifically designed to encourage casual riders, and enable people who may not feel comfortable traveling on city streets to do so. In September an annual “BowTie” ride follows the Cambridge geographical layout. These rides, which typically draw 200 - 250 people, are created and led by members of the Committee, and supported by

community businesses. Additional special rides have included a Halloween Ride for children and winter rides to support people learning tips for riding in colder weather.



Cambridge Bicycle Committee Ride.

Information on all Cambridge Bike Committee rides can be found at: cambridgema.gov/bikerides.

COORDINATION AMONG CITY DEPARTMENTS AND WITH OTHER AGENCIES

Many bicycle-related issues and projects have overlapping jurisdictions within City departments. To coordinate the planning and implementation of transportation projects, Cambridge staff who deal with transportation issues meet monthly.

There are several standing interdepartmental committees who work together on projects and programs to support and encourage bicycling:

- + **Transportation-related committees and meetings (DPW, TP&T, CDD, Disabilities Commission): Regular coordinating meetings are held to review City projects with transportation elements. Subjects include but are not limited to major infrastructure projects, traffic calming projects and quick-build bicycle projects.**

- + **Development Project Coordination (CDD, DPW, TP&T).** Coordinate the review of development projects under review by City staff, including Planning Board Special Permit projects as well as others requiring multidepartment review.
- + **Healthy Children’s Task Force (Health; Schools, TP&T, CDD, Community Groups:** Promotes the health of children in Cambridge through identification of priority topics and resources and development of strategies for addressing issues. Supports youth physical activity, including walking and bicycling to school. The 5-2-1 Committee focuses particularly on promoting physical activity.
- + **Food and Fitness Policy Council (Health, CDD, Schools, Human Services, Community Organizations, Universities):** Promotes health through improving access for all residents to healthy foods and to physical activity.
- + **Vision Zero (TP&T, CDD, DPW, Human Services, Police, City Manager’s Office, Human Resources, Cambridge Public Schools, Information Technology):** Interdepartmental group to coordinate City efforts on implementing the Vision Zero Action Plan. A Vision Zero Citizen Committee also is in place.

- + **VISION ZERO AND THE EVOLVING ROLE OF THE CAMBRIDGE POLICE DEPARTMENT**
- + **Until recently, the role of the Cambridge Police Department was primarily focused on enforcement and education. The goal of enforcement and education was to increase compliance with existing laws with a corresponding reduction in frequency and severity of injuries. These efforts were often dictated by community concerns or in response to a serious crash. While well intentioned, these efforts did not always match up with high crash locations and did not always address the full range of community concerns. Two major shifts have influenced a refocusing of efforts. The adoption of Vision Zero (see also Chapter 1) means utilizing a more data-driven decision-making approach to identify high crash locations. The types of enforcement under Vision Zero are closely scrutinized to ensure they are addressing the identified concerns. The Police Department has incorporated Vision Zero training for all new officers, at veteran officer annual training, and for newly promoted supervisors. The second major shift concerns the evolving discussions about the overall role of policing in the community and thinking about the level of enforcement desired by the community.**



Speed trailers remind drivers about safe travel speeds gather information on traffic speed and volume.

One example of this shifting focus is enforcement of blocked bicycle lanes. In 2016, in recognition of the seriousness of this action, a new state law was passed that has given added options for addressing the issue and which has proved to be much more effective in keeping vehicles out of bicycle lanes. Another shift was to think about moving violations in terms of their value in reducing the frequency and severity of crashes. Enforcement that doesn’t support these goals is discouraged.

Another way to support Vision Zero is to ensure that investigations of serious bodily injury or fatal crashes receive a thorough investigation in collaboration with the District Attorney’s Office, the Massachusetts State Police, and other stakeholders as appropriate. Crash investigators for the Police Department have completed extensive training in

crash reconstruction and analysis. A new system that allows a detailed map of a crash scene to be generated via 360-degree laser measurement. This allows for a permanent and detailed record of the crash scene at the time of the crash as well as enabling roadways to be reopened sooner after an incident. The Police Department works as part of a team of City staff that meets as soon as possible after a serious crash occurs to analyze factors that may have contributed to the crash. The team also identifies short- and long-term changes that could improve safety.

Together, these changes provide a more nuanced approach to improving roadway safety and not just relying on enforcement to achieve our vision of a safer, more accessible, and more just experience for every roadway user.

The Police Department continues to be a partner in sponsored community rides, helmet and light giveaways, Safe Routes to School planning and neighborhood meetings.

HEALTH-RELATED INITIATIVES AND COORDINATION

CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Cambridge Public Health Department has a central role in encouraging bicycling as part of promoting active lifestyles and obesity prevention in policies, outreach efforts, and promotional activities and many of their activities are done in partnership with other departments.

COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is a comprehensive plan that sets the Public Health Department's health agenda for five-year periods. This interdepartmental, community organization, and resident-driven plan addresses some of the most challenging public health issues facing Cambridge. The plan describes actionable goals,

objectives, and strategies for making tangible progress in these health priority areas for the city:

- + Mental health and substance abuse
- + Violence
- + Healthy, safe, and affordable housing
- + Healthy eating and physical activity
- + Health access
- + Health equity/social justice

CAMBRIDGE IN MOTION

Cambridge in Motion (CIM) aims to create an environment that makes it easier for residents and people who work in the city to be physically active. CIM supports the City's Public Health, Community Development, and School Departments in expanding existing initiatives and piloting new ones. The program partners with community organizations and other City departments to promote healthy eating and physical activity through policy, systems, and environmental approaches. Funded by a federal Community Transformation Grant, it is part of the statewide Mass in Motion initiative.



Ride leaders at a Cambridge community bike ride.

OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES

The City of Cambridge engages regularly with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to coordinate on transportation planning and safety initiatives, as well as roadway design projects. The MBTA operates the region's transit system and DCR owns and manages several important parkways and paths in Cambridge. The Cambridge Office for Tourism provides information on getting around Cambridge by bike for visitors.

CAMBRIDGE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The Cambridge Redevelopment Authority (CRA), an independent public authority working in Cambridge, collaborates with the City to establish comprehensive streetscape designs to facilitate multi-modal infrastructure in Kendall Square. The CRA constructed the first portion of the Grand Junction multi-use path, staffs the Kendall Square Transit Enhancement Program (KSTEP), and conducts annual multi-modal traffic counts in Kendall Square. The CRA undertakes an annual transportation report page, available on their website.



The first portion of the Grand Junction multi-use path was constructed by the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority.

WORKING WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Local organizations and institutions are important partners in supporting bicycling in Cambridge. This section describes some of these partners but is not an exhaustive list.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Distributes outreach materials to incoming students; promotes bicycling extensively through the Commuter Choice Office; donated seven Bluebikes stations in Cambridge (and seven in Boston); invested in improved bicycle infrastructure in the public realm.



Harvard constructed the bicycle facilities along the Quincy-DeWolfe corridor, to help people travel to and from the Charles River to Harvard Square and Harvard Yard.

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (MIT)

Promotes bicycling through its transportation services and planning offices; provided four Bluebikes stations; constructed the country's first true cycle track on Vassar Street (2004).



Vassar Street with a fully grade-separated bicycle facility.

EF EDUCATION FIRST

Donated a large Bluebikes station; constructed expanded off-road paths in the North Point area; supports and helps to promote the expansion of the path system.



Connected paths were constructed in North Point as part of EF's campus expansion.

LESLEY UNIVERSITY

Promotes bicycling as transportation; has an internal bike share system; added a Bluebikes station in 2015.

PRIVATE SECTOR

TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATIONS

Charles River TMA (CRTMA). Helps local businesses develop convenient programs, improve mobility and promote accessibility to the Kendall Square and East Cambridge area. Promotes bicycling with information and support. Runs the EZRide Shuttle, open to the public, between Kendall Square, Fort Washington, Lechmere, and North Station carrying nearly a half million passengers per year.

Alewife TMA. A partnership between businesses, developers, and residential buildings who join together to reduce traffic congestion and air pollution and improve transportation options in the Alewife area. Runs the Alewife TMA Shuttle, open to members.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS AND CAMBRIDGE LOCAL FIRST

These work to support vibrant livable cities and recognize that Cambridge is a city where people who bicycle and walk are likely to support local businesses. For references, the Economic Development division of CDD provides information about [Cambridge Commercial Districts](#).

LOCAL BICYCLE SHOPS/ENTERPRISES

There are five bicycle shops located in Cambridge (as of 2020): Broadway Bicycle, Cambridge

Bicycle, Cambridge Used Bicycles, CrimsonBikes and Quad Bikes. Bicycle Belle and Wheelworks Somerville are in Somerville just on the city borders. UrbanAdventours is a Boston-based company that rents bicycles and leads guided tours of Cambridge.

Park&Pedal is a network of parking stations in communities surrounding Cambridge located to be withing cycling distance of the city’s employment centers, allowing people to park a car in a designated spot, and pedal a bike to work, avoiding “last-mile” congestion and parking in the city.

INDIVIDUAL BUSINESSES/COMPANIES AND BLUEBIKES CHAMPIONS

Many companies choose to locate in Cambridge specifically for its livability and the desire of their employees for a community that supports active lifestyles. Several companies have voluntarily donated Bluebikes stations to support their employees (Biogen, BioMed Realty, EF Education First, CambridgeSide, Alexandria Real Estate, Verizon, and Google). In addition, as of 2020 there

are 340 companies, universities, and institutions system-wide – including almost 90 in Cambridge – who partner with Bluebikes through the Corporate Membership Program. That program offers discounted memberships to employees and students of participating organizations. This demonstrates the high support and interest for companies and organizations to provide this benefit to their employees.

The CambridgeSide Galleria partners with the City on the annual Run & Ride event to promote active health and fitness for children.

ADVOCACY AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS⁴

BICYCLE BENEFITS

Promotes the partnership of bicycling and businesses; a Bicycle Benefits sticker will provide discounts to member businesses. Free stickers for Bluebikes members.

BOSTON CYCLISTS UNION

Advocacy organization to promote bicycling as a normal way to get around for people of all walks of life. Works primarily in Boston but also in neighboring communities, including Cambridge and Somerville.

CAMBRIDGE BIKE GIVE BACK

Community organization started during the COVID-19 pandemic in response to needs the founders saw in the community for affordable and safe transportation. “We build community resiliency through recycling, restoring abandoned / broken bikes and reducing the unsightly waste in our city. The goals of this project are to alleviate transportation insecurity, build community, and create local self-sufficiency in transit as well as health and wellness.”



Hey kids! Save the Date!

Do you love to ride your bike and run? Compete in the **sixth annual, kids only FREE duathlon** with biking and running in and around CambridgeSide! For kids ages 5-13 years old, with prizes, race T-shirts, giveaways, entertainment and more. Registration opens in June.

iPad awarded for each race winner!

Sunday, July 26, 2015

8:30am Registration • 10am Event Begins
CambridgeSide - Canal Park
100 CambridgeSide Place, Cambridge, MA

FREE family fun!



www.shopcambridgeside.com

*iPad awarded to first place winner for both boy and girl category in each age bracket. Eight will be awarded.



CambridgeSide Galleria Event Poster

CAMBRIDGE BIKE SAFETY

Advocacy organization that identifies as “a group of Cambridge residents interested in promoting safety for cyclists of all ages and abilities in Cambridge, Massachusetts.”

CYCLEKIDS

Dedicated to teaching children to ride, the CYCLE Kids program teaches children in schools..

GREEN STREETS INITIATIVE

A Cambridge-based organization “Dedicated to celebrating and promoting the use of sustainable and active transportation.”

LIVABLESTREETS ALLIANCE

Advocacy organization to promote livable communities that rely on sustainable transportation.

MASSBIKE

The statewide bicycle advocacy organization; partners with the City to lead bicycle workshops; advocates on a state-wide level for legislation to support bicycling.

SOUL ON WHEELS

Cambridge native James Adius Pierre organizes bike rides for Black men and other men of color. Some rides have topical and serious meaning, such as a 2020 “Celebration of Life” bike ride inspired by the summer’s unrest and the March on Washington anniversary; others are more social, such as a 2019 ride with a focus on fashion.



Soul on Wheels Ride

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE EMPLOYEES

ENGAGEMENT OF CITY STAFF

Cambridge encourages biking as an option for City staff through training opportunities and other bicycle benefits.

BIKE EDUCATION WORKSHOPS

City employees are invited to attend all community bike workshops. Additionally, staff-only workshops are scheduled and offered as official professional development trainings for City employees.

TRANSPORTATION WORKSHOPS

The City hosts departmental trainings for City staff on the transportation benefits offered to City employees. These workshops focus on all sustainable modes of transportation and teach employees the rules of the road when on bike, on foot, or in a car.

BICYCLE TUNE-UPS

The City offers free bicycle tune-ups for City employees every spring and summer. Dozens of City staff take advantage of these workshops each year.

BLUEBIKES MEMBERSHIP

The City offers its employees free or discounted Bluebikes membership. A priority of the Bluebikes system is to have stations near municipal buildings (including schools), so City staff often have the option to commute to work, travel between city buildings, or conduct work-related site visits using Bluebikes.

CITY BICYCLES

Some City departments use bicycles as fleet vehicles.

- + **Police.** The Police Department's Community Relations unit patrols by bike. It has led bicycle education programs in the Cambridge schools and at special events, engaged in targeted enforcement activities with people in Cambridge, and worked on preventing bicycle theft. Members of the Department accompany community bike rides, like those held by the Cambridge Bicycle Committee, and support student on-bike learning at bicycle rodeos and SRTS trainings.
- + **Fire Department.** The Fire Department uses bicycles for EMT responders; members of the department frequently accompany the Cambridge Bicycle Committee community rides to provide support.
- + **DPW Operations.** Bicycles are used for some recycling pickup and for street tree watering.



DPW staff watering trees using bicycles and bike

REGULATIONS THAT SUPPORT BICYCLING

CAMBRIDGE ZONING ORDINANCE

The policies imbued in the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance are focused on creating a sustainable, human-scale environment. In particular, Article 19 of the Zoning Ordinance has specific requirements intended to ensure that new developments create a pedestrian and bicycle-friendly environment. Article 6 of the ordinance also has detailed requirements related to bicycle parking, specifically the number and placement of parking spaces. See Chapter 7 and Appendix I for further details on bicycle parking.

ARTICLE 19

Article 19 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance is a special permit process for large projects that requires a rigorous analysis of transportation impacts, including bicycle and pedestrian circulation. Its goal is to “encourage applicants to adopt a development program that reduces the number of single occupancy vehicles coming to the site. Such a program would encourage pedestrian and bicycle access to the site and throughout the neighboring district and reduce potential negative impacts on abutting properties of the vehicles coming to the site.”

Part of the requirements are for new development projects to undertake a Traffic Impact Study, including bicycle and pedestrian counts, an evaluation of the access and connectivity that people have when traveling by bicycle and foot to the development site, and an analysis of the impacts of new traffic generated by the development on the safety of people walking and cycling. Developers are often required to undertake mitigation measures such as adding bicycle facilities on roads adjacent to the project.



Short-term racks located near building entrances ensure convenient and easy access for people bicycling

PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE

The PTDM Ordinance requires property owners to provide transportation programs to ensure that people traveling to those sites primarily use sustainable transportation. Examples of required programs include showers and locker rooms, bicycle fixit stations, financial incentives for people walking or bicycling, and flexible parking arrangements options for people who usually arrive by sustainable mode but occasionally need to drive a car.

The PTDM Ordinance is a national model for improving mobility and access, reducing congestion and air pollution, and increasing safety by promoting walking, bicycling, and public transit. Evaluation of the program shows that many companies give commute benefits voluntarily because employees have come to expect them, such as on-site bike repair service, loaner bikes, and bike-buddy matching.

The PTDM Ordinance in 2019 covered 48,000 employees (33% of total Cambridge employees), and only 36% of people in monitored properties drove alone to work. The success of the PTDM Ordinance can be seen in its ability to limit traffic. In the Kendall Square area alone, where more than 6 million square feet of development occurred over a decade, traffic on area streets did not increase. Much of this new development is in the high tech and biotech/R&D field, where attracting employees is competitive and many of those workers want to be able to bike to work. For more information about the program, visit [the PTDM website](#).

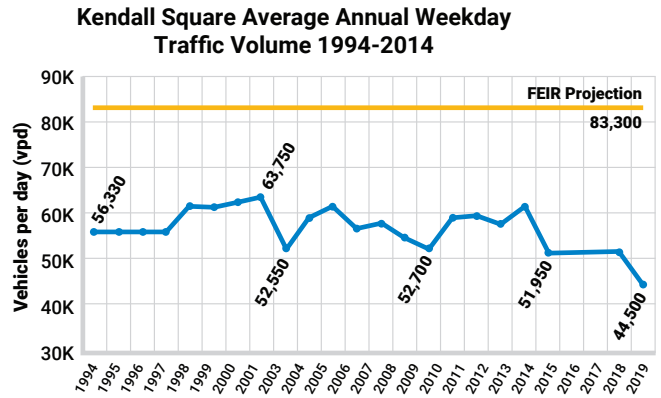


Figure 6.1: Average weekday traffic volumes for Kendall Square measured between 1994 - 2019. Data suggests that motor vehicle traffic remains significantly below initial projections.

ENDNOTES

- 1 The Governor's Highway Safety Bureau in Massachusetts is responsible for changes to the driver's education manual and tests.
- 2 The Community Engagement Team is a multi-agency collaboration housed in the Department of Human Services that reaches out to underserved Cambridge families and connects them to community events and resources, develops community leaders, and supports agencies in working with a diverse community. The Community Engagement Team hires and trains community members (American Born Black, Bangladeshi, Brazilian, Ethiopian, Haitian, Somali and Spanish and Portuguese speaking) as outreach workers to reach out to and engage underserved families in their native communities. <http://www2.cambridge.ma.gov/dhsp2/cet.cfm>.
- 3 This engagement, funded by the Massachusetts Councils on Aging, was a partnership between the Fresh Pond Apartments (low-income housing), the Agassiz Baldwin Community Center, the Council on Aging, MassBike, the Volunteer Health Advisors, the Community Development Department, and the Cambridge Public Health Department.
- 4 The advocacy and grassroots community organizations here are those whose primary focus is at least partly on promoting and supporting people bicycling; there are other groups who may also get involved in related events. There are also new groups that arise on a regular basis, so these are those known as of the date of publication.



DPW uses bicycles for a variety of tasks; recycling bin operations are shown here.